



NEWS RELEASE

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EPICON continues its investigation

HEIDELBERG, Germany – The U.S. Army Medical Command's (MEDCOM) Epidemiology Consultation Team (EPICON) continues to investigate the three deaths in Germany attributed to sub groups of meningococcal bacteria.

Capt. Scott Fujimoto, a U.S. Air Force physician-epidemiologist with the U.S. Air Force Institute for Operational Health (AFIOH), is collaborating with the Army EPICON Team. Fujimoto is conducting extensive research in Spangdahlem surrounding the death of Lindsey Ferris, a 26-year-old agent with the Office of Special Investigations at Spangdahlem Air Base. He interviewed Ferris' co-workers and property owner, and then met with the chief of medical staff at Bitburg hospital and the Trier German Public Health Officer. Today, Dr. Fujimoto continues efforts to identify all potential close contacts and review medical records.

Other members of the EPICON team continue to analyze data and review literature.

Team members are holding discussions with military units, Family Readiness Groups, and the educational community to get feedback regarding effectiveness of meningococcal education efforts on this issue. Once finalized, a short survey will be posted on the 1st Infantry Division website for additional feedback.

The team continues to study the epidemiology of meningococcal disease in Germany and nearby countries, with specific comparison of localized outbreaks and sporadic cases to the current situation. They are also working with automated health care systems to determine applicable medical data for each case (medical encounters, laboratory results, etc.)

"These three cases in the U.S. military community do not reflect anything unusual during this time of year, we are simply being cautious," said COL Bruno Petrucci.